

Ambassador, Algeria

Term of Appointment: 07/10/2003 to 07/15/2006

Richard W. Erdman



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Mr. Erdman was sworn in as U.S. Ambassador to Algeria on July 10, 2003.

Mr. Erdman is a career Foreign Service officer with the rank of Minister Counselor and 32 years of experience with the Department of State in postings both in Washington and abroad. He most recently served as the Senior Area Adviser for the Middle East to the U.S. delegation to the 2002 United Nations General Assembly. From 2000-2002 he was Director for Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. He was the U.S. Special Envoy and head of the U.S. delegation to the Israel Lebanon Monitoring Group, an ambassadorial-level position in which he led negotiations among Syria, Lebanon, and Israel concerning the fighting in southern

Lebanon. The Monitoring Group played a major crisis management role in protecting civilians, defusing tensions, and preventing a serious escalation of regional fighting over southern Lebanon.

Mr. Erdman served as Political Counselor in Tel Aviv (1995-1998), Deputy Head of the International Border Monitoring Mission in Serbia, and Deputy Director for Eastern Europe (1993-94). In that capacity, he was the deputy to the President's Special Envoy on Former Yugoslavia and the Deputy Head of the U.S. delegation that negotiated the Bosnian Federation Constitution Agreement, a key step that ended the two-front war in Bosnia and paved the way for the subsequent Dayton Accords. Mr. Erdman personally negotiated a substantial portion of the Agreement.

His other postings include: Deputy Director for Northern Europe (1991-1993), with policy management responsibilities for 10 countries, including the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Benelux, and Scandinavia; Senior Area Adviser to the U.S. delegation to the 1989 UN General Assembly; Acting Political Counselor and Political-Military Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Lisbon, Portugal (1985-1989); Senior Watch Officer in the State Department Operations Center (1982-83); Spain Desk Officer (1983-1985); Political Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1978-1981); Political Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Nicosia, Cyprus (1975-1977); Cyprus Desk Officer (1973-1975); and Consular Officer in Izmir, Turkey (1971-1973). From 1967-1969 Mr. Erdman served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Turkey.

Mr. Erdman received a Presidential Meritorious Service Award in 2001; a Superior Honor Award in 2000 for his work as Special Envoy; a Superior Honor Award in 1998 for his contributions to U.S. Middle East peace process policies; and Senior Performance Pay Awards in 2000, 2001, and 2002.

Mr. Erdman was born in Oak Park, Illinois in 1945 and was graduated magna cum laude from Princeton University in 1967 with a degree in history. He also received a master's degree in international relations from the Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies, spending his second year of study in Bologna, Italy. He enjoys hiking, tennis, sailing, and travel and is an accomplished painter, musician, and cabinet-maker. Mr. Erdman speaks French, Turkish, Portuguese, and Serbo-Croatian.